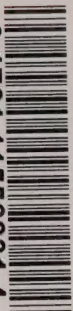


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Backgrounder: Demographics







# background

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Publications

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## Demographics

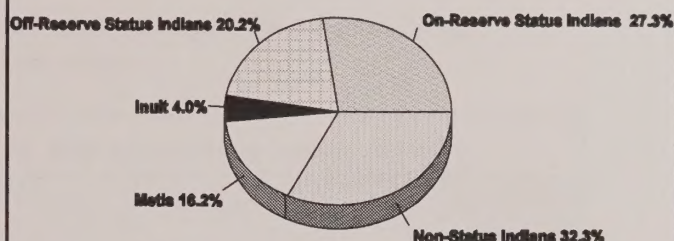
**Nationally:** 4.4% of all Canadians have Aboriginal ancestry (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) projections, 1997).

**Cultural diversity:** There are 608 First Nations, comprising 52 Nations or cultural groups (Haida, Cree, Mohawk, etc.) and more than 50 languages.

**Population structure:** The Registered (i.e., Status) Indian population is young, with a median age of 25, compared to a median of 35 years for all Canadians. About 53% of Registered Indians living on reserves are under 25 years old. (DIAND Projections, 1997)

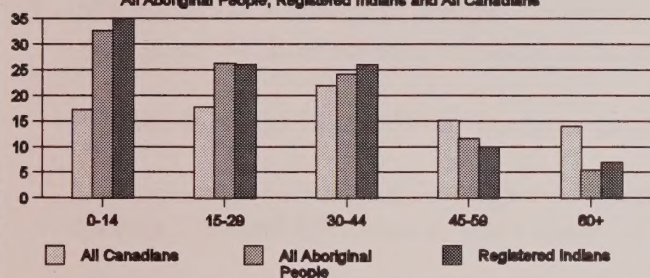
### Estimated Aboriginal Population (1997)

Total 1,333,700



### Age Distribution, 1997

All Aboriginal People, Registered Indians and All Canadians



All age segments are growing: between 1997 and 2005, the Registered Indian population of working age (15-64 years of age) is projected to grow from 64% to 65% and the senior population (65 years and older) will grow from 4.2% to 4.8%. (DIAND Projections, rapid growth) Service demands will increase for all age groups.

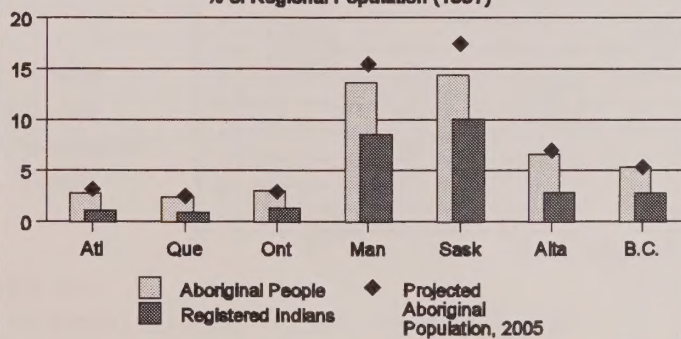
The gender distribution (49:51 male:female) for Aboriginal people is approximately the same as for all Canadians.

**Population Projections** from 1997 to 2005 suggest that the Aboriginal population will grow by 1.7% yearly, a rate slightly higher than the Canadian rate of 1.1%. On reserves, the population is projected to grow by 2.3% over the same period. (DIAND Projections, rapid growth)

**Population distribution:** The provinces with the largest proportion of Aboriginal people are Manitoba and Saskatchewan, where Aboriginal people represent 14% of the population. In the territories, Aboriginal people represent 67% in the NWT and 29% of the population in Yukon.

### Aboriginal Population

% of Regional Population (1997)



Indian and Northern  
Affairs Canada

Affaires indiennes  
et du Nord Canada



Canada





**Community size:** Many First Nation communities (43%) have fewer than 500 residents; only a small percentage (11%) have more than 2,000 residents. However, 38% of the population is concentrated in the larger communities, whereas only 12% of the population lives in smaller communities.

## ❑ Population location (1991):

Most Aboriginal people live outside reserves; however, less than half of the Registered Indian population (41%) live outside reserves. (1991 Census/APS, DIAND projections, 1997)

**Population is increasingly urban:** From 1981 to 1991, the urban Aboriginal population grew by 62%, compared to 11% for other urban Canadians. By 2016, the urban Aboriginal population is projected to be 457,000. Population growth in urban areas is fuelled by natural increases (birth rate) as well as net migration from rural areas. (1991 Census/Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS), Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) projections)

### Status Indians Living Outside Reserves

- In 1985, 29% of Status Indians lived outside reserves.
- By 1991, 40% of Status Indians lived outside reserves. This major change was due to the reinstatement of Status Indians under Bill C-31. (Indian Register actuals)

<b>OFF-RESERVE POPULATION 1991: % Urban-Rural by Aboriginal Group</b> (source: RCAP)					
	All Aboriginal People	Registered Indians	Non-Registered Indians	Métis	Inuit
% Urban	69	81	69	65	22
% Rural	31	19	31	35	78

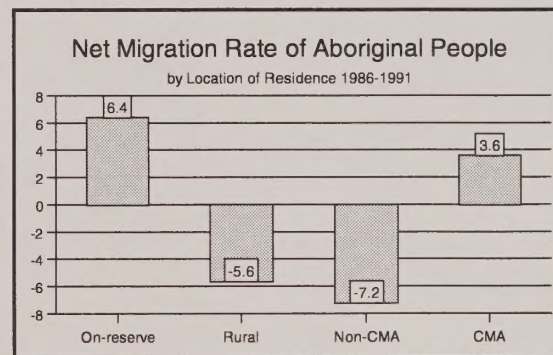
## ❑ Migration of Aboriginal People [Clatworthy, 1995]: (i.e. moves within or between provinces, or to another country)

Between 1986 and 1991, 60% of Aboriginal people relocated, compared to 46% of other Canadians.

Migration rates were highest for Registered Indian youth (15-24 years of age): 72% changed locations between 1986 and 1991. (Source: 1991 Census)

The on-reserve population grew by 6.4% due to migration, whereas migration increased the urban (CMA) population by 3.6 %. (A CMA is an urban centre of more than 100,000 people).

**Inter-provincial** net migration rates from 1986-1991 were highest in Alberta and British Columbia (2,515 and 1,080 people moved *to* these provinces), and lowest in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (1,050 and 1,085 Aboriginal people moved *away*).



Source: Clatworthy 1995

Migration flows between geographic zones show that most migration was towards reserves (9,540 returned). Aboriginal migration to urban centres from rural and suburban areas (non-CMA), are both considered as off-reserve. In other words, no net migration occurred directly from reserves into cities between 1986 and 1991.



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